

City Council
Study Session Summary
February 28, 2017
Library Meeting Room, 951 Spruce Street
7:00 PM

The City Council met in a study session at 7:00 p.m. in the 1st Floor Meeting Room at the Louisville Public Library at 951 Spruce Street, Louisville, Colorado. The following persons were present:

City Council Present: Mayor Bob Muckle
Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Lipton
Council member Jay Keany
Council member Chris Leh
Council member Susan Loo
Council member Ashley Stolzmann

Staff Present: Malcolm Fleming, City Manager
Heather Balser, Deputy City Manager
Joe Stevens, Parks and Recreation Director
Kevin Watson, Finance Director
Rob Zuccaro, Planning and Building Safety Director
Ember Brignull, Open Space Manager
David Dean, Golf Course Superintendent
Dean Johnson, Parks Superintendent
Dawn Burgess, Executive Assistant to the City Manager

Members of Public

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Muckle

Discussion – Integrated Weed Management Plan

Parks and Recreation Director Joe Stevens, Open Space Manager Ember Brignull and Parks Superintendent Dean Johnson gave a presentation on the Integrated Weed Management Plan for the City. Advisory boards have reviewed the Integrated Weed Management Plan (IWMP) and made recommendations. Herbicides around playgrounds have been eliminated, in part, because of a petition that was circulated. Our policy and procedures are similar to other municipalities' and in compliance with federal, state and local agencies.

Parks Superintendent Johnson said the Parks, Public Landscaping Advisory Board (PPLAB) brought up to speed on current practices. The Horticulture and Forestry Advisory Board (HFAB) looked into this in 2007-08. November 2016, PPLAB was brought up to speed on regulatory authorities and common practices. Summary of the meeting, focused on whether to advise change of practices. PPLAB wanted to make recommendations that would be accepted. In December PPLAB discussed further and agreed to recommend banning herbicides as a pilot program around the playground footprint.

Staff believes this will cost the City approximately \$12,000 – which would be used to dedicate staff for pulling weeds around playground. \$12,000 would be for seasonal employees to rotate through 15 playgrounds to pull weeds.

Open Space Manager Brignull said the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB) focus was less on petition and more on reviewing the Integrated Weed Management Plan, discussing weed control in 2016, the CSU study and introducing other methods of controlling weeds. Brignull reviewed CSU study. CSU study is focusing on seed which is a different approach. OSAB unanimously voted to support CSU research: Education, more research and new methods.

Council member Susan Loo said this is a first time attempt. Staff will have to hand rake and/or hand pull the playgrounds. As always, there are unintended consequences; one is that we have sand wasps, though benign, she would like staff to try to avoid raking with they are nesting.

Johnson would like signage at each playground stating we are herbicide free and looking for volunteers. We will not have the same look at playgrounds without herbicides.

Parks and Recreation Director Stevens said we have a lot of volunteers for sports and senior activities but will need volunteers for weeds. Perhaps get HOAs to assist and hold community weed pull.

Mayor Pro Tem Lipton said if you are depending on community weed pulls, you have already lost the battle. We will need continuous labor that is there every day. Want to focus on cultural practices and supplement with weed pulls. Develop labor plan to stay ahead of weeds. He agrees with not using herbicides in playgrounds.

CIP has playground replacement program. Material does not support weed growth.

Council member Ashley Stolzmann said we need to communicate to people to pull weeds and encourage people to pitch in. What are alternatives? Johnson said the City of Boulder does not use organic chemicals and he believes they are

not effective. There was discussion of alternatives with Johnson and Council member Lipton saying their experience with any alternatives has not been positive. Council member Stolzmann would like to have a list of options considered and why they did not work.

Mayor Muckle said we have been reducing chemical uses over 15 years. We are trending the right way.

Public comments:

I do not care about looking at weeds. Federal standards are not good enough. I would like to see pilot extended to grassy open spaces. Volunteer weed pullers would be good. Signage is needed a week in advance so hikers know what and where is being sprayed. Community Park dog park is sprayed, Davidson Mesa dog park is not sprayed.

Herbicide comes from the Latin word for killer. If science isn't settled, why have several European countries banned this?

Want education as to when you are spraying.

Parks staff is not looking for additional funds.

Allow public to subscribe to email list. Publish new groups to subscribers.

Discussion – Impact Fee Overcharge and Budget Implications

City Manager Fleming reviewed how impact fees were inappropriately collected in 2015 and 2016 in the amount of \$780,000. Four developers were impacted. Working on what will be the implications to open space and parks fund and capital projects fund. Refunds will be made.

Finance Director Kevin Watson said initial transfers will provide no repercussions until 2018. Budget for 2016 – 2017 will not be impacted. We have a year to come up with plan to deal with impacts of error. The interest will be between \$5000 - \$6000.

Council member Lipton asked how one person changed the system and have you looked at other projects of similar nature and what controls are in place. Initial internal controls are in Building Dept. Planning and Public Safety Director Rob Zuccaro said he has checked all fees and calculations. What are our areas of vulnerability? Fleming said the City will make sure there is a flow chart and review process in place to make sure there is accuracy. Fleming wants processes in place where we collect fees, proper controls in place.

Director Watson explained that this will affect our financial statements for 2016. This is more of a management issue rather than a financial statement audit issue.

Council member Stolzmann asked what were the revenue projections for those years? The error should have triggered a large variance from the budget and provided an opportunity to catch it.

Formulas and projections need to be reviewed.

There was discussion of how this could have been overlooked.

Council member Leh said the good news is that it was found internally. Staff needs to evaluate how to prevent this from happening again.

We will have it corrected before issuance of 2016 financial statements. We should do a complete review. Issue will be internal controls with auditors.

Council member Stolzmann does not believe we have a year to consider this before the 2018 impact. She wants to know earlier and deliberately if it is going to affect capital projects. Council member Lipton agrees - we need to do some target planning. We will need to open the CIP and ask if we need to delay CIP that are just starting? Council member Loo agrees and said \$780,000 is a substantial sum of money.

Director Watson said he is trying to come up with a solution to keep biennial budget intact.

City Manager Fleming said the intent is to do it during biennial review.

City Manager's Report & Advanced Agenda

- Discussion of Golf Strategic plan – this was roughly in accordance with Council direction.
- Council would like notice of spraying publicized.
- Council would like staff to reduce presentation time. Planning looking at presentation summary.
- Staff will get advice from Sam on whether or not we can put 1st readings on Consent.

Identification of Future Agenda Items **Adjourn 8:27 pm**